

Serial No.: 10/729,503  
Attorney Docket No.: F-758

Patent

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**Amendment To The Claims**

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Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (currently amended) A method comprising:

determining a first likely sequence of expected observation events for a first mail piece and a second likely sequence of expected observation events for a second mail piece wherein the second mail piece is associated with the first mail piece and the second likely sequence of expected observation events is associated with the first likely sequence of expected observation events;

determining that a first expected observation event from the first likely sequence of expected observation events has not occurred for a the first mail piece;

using the first expected observation event to determine a second expected observation event associated with the first expected observation event and  
determining that a the second expected observation event has occurred for a the second mail piece; and

providing an alarm indication with respect to the first mail piece based at least in part on non-occurrence of the first expected observation event and on occurrence of the second expected observation event.

2. (currently amended) The method according to claim 1, further comprising:

after determining the first and second likely sequence of expected observation events and prior to the observation occurrence determining steps, simultaneously delivering the first and second mail pieces to a postal authority.

3. (original) The method according to claim 2, wherein the first mail piece exhibits a first postal code to direct delivery via a first post office and the second mail piece exhibits a second postal code to direct delivery via the first post office.

Serial No.: 10/729,503  
Attorney Docket No.: F-758

Patent

4. (original) The method according to claim 3, wherein the first and second postal codes are identical to each other.
5. (original) The method according to claim 4, wherein each of the first and second postal codes is indicated as a POSTNET barcode.
6. (original) The method according to claim 5, wherein each of the first and second mail pieces exhibits a respective PLANET barcode.
7. (original) The method according to claim 3, wherein each of the first and second postal codes is indicated as a POSTNET barcode.
8. (original) The method according to claim 7, wherein each of the first and second mail pieces exhibits a PLANET barcode.
9. (original) The method according to claim 2, wherein the first mail piece includes a credit or debit card and the second mail piece does not include a credit or debit card.
10. (original) The method according to claim 9, wherein the second mail piece has an appearance that is substantially different from an appearance of the first mail piece.
11. (currently amended) A mail piece tracking system, comprising:  
means for determining a first likely sequence of expected observation events for a first mail piece and a second likely sequence of expected observation events for a

Serial No.: 10/729,503  
Attorney Docket No.: F-758

Patent

second mail piece wherein the second mail piece is associated with the first mail piece and the second likely sequence of expected observation events is associated with the first likely sequence of expected observation events;

first means for determining that a first expected observation event from the first likely sequence of expected observation events has not occurred for a the first mail piece

second means for using the first expected observation event to determine a second expected observation event associated with the first expected observation event and determining that a the second expected observation event has occurred for a the second mail piece; and

third means, operatively coupled to the first and second means, for providing an alarm indication with respect to the first mail piece based at least in part on non-occurrence of the first expected observation event and on occurrence of the second expected observation event.

12. (original) The mail piece tracking system according to claim 11, further comprising:

an observation event database for storing observation event information;

a mailing information database for storing information indicative of delivery of the first and second mail pieces to a postal authority; and

a historical information database for storing information indicative of a sequence of expected observation events for the first and second mail pieces;

the first and second means being operatively coupled to the observation event database, to the mailing information database and to the historical information database.

Serial No.: 10/729,503  
Attorney Docket No.: F-758

Patent

13. (original) The mail piece tracking system according to claim 11, further comprising:

a processor programmed to constitute at least part of both the first and second means.

14. (currently amended) A mail piece tracking system, comprising:

a processor;

a storage device operatively coupled to the processor and storing a program to control the processor to:

determine a first likely sequence of expected observation events for a first mail piece and a second likely sequence of expected observation events for a second mail piece wherein the second mail piece is associated with the first mail piece and the second likely sequence of expected observation events is associated with the first likely sequence of expected observation events;

determine that a first expected observation event from the first likely sequence of expected observation events has not occurred for a the first mail piece;

use the first expected observation event to determine a second expected observation event associated with the first expected observation event and determine that a the second expected observation event has occurred for a the second mail piece; and

provide an alarm indication with respect to the first mail piece based at least in part on non-occurrence of the first expected observation event and on occurrence of the second expected observation event.

15. (original) The mail piece tracking system according to claim 14, wherein the storage device further stores:

Serial No.: 10/729,503  
Attorney Docket No.: F-758

Patent

an observation event database for storing observation event information;  
a mailing information database for storing information indicative of  
delivery of the first and second mail pieces to a postal authority; and  
a historical information database for storing information indicative of a  
sequence of expected observation events for the first and second mail pieces.

16. (canceled).

17. (new) The method according to claim 1, further comprising:

associating a plurality of additional tracked mail pieces with the first mail piece;  
and

providing an alarm indication with respect to the plurality of additional tracked  
mail pieces based at least in part on non-occurrence of the first expected observation  
event and on occurrence of the second expected observation event.

18. (new) The method according to claim 1, wherein the first and second expected  
observation events comprise an induction scan.

19. (new) The method according to claim 1, wherein the first and second expected  
observation events comprise a postal authority internal sorting equipment sort scan.

20. (new) The method according to claim 1, wherein the first and second expected  
observation events comprise a delivery sort scan.

21. (new) The method according to claim 1, wherein the first and second likely  
sequence of expected observation events is determined using historical mail piece  
processing data.